

report to the Congress pursuant to subsection (b) of the Pelly Amendment.

The certification of the Secretary of Commerce was based on the issuance by the Government of Norway of permits to its nationals, allowing the killing of North Atlantic minke whales for research purposes. At its 44th Annual Meeting, the IWC adopted a resolution stating that the Norwegian research program did not satisfy all criteria for research involving the take of whales. In particular, concern was expressed that the Government had not adequately structured the research so as to contribute to or materially facilitate the completion of the IWC comprehensive assessment. The IWC was also of the view that the Government of Norway had not established that its research addresses critically important research needs. Research that does not meet all applicable criteria is considered inconsistent with IWC conservation policy. In view of these concerns, the IWC invited Norway to reconsider its program. The Norwegian Government issued permits for the proposed take prior to the IWC meeting, and, on the last day of the meeting, the Norwegian whaling vessels reportedly set sail. Since then, 95 minke whales have been taken.

I am also greatly concerned about the announcement made by the Government of Norway at the beginning of the 44th Annual Meeting of the IWC that Norway would resume commercial whaling in 1993, irrespective of the decisions of the IWC. The moratorium on commercial whaling adopted by the IWC is observed by the

entire community of nations, including those that are not members of the IWC. If Norway, a founding member of the IWC, were to disregard the moratorium, it would very likely lead to grave consequences for the effectiveness of the IWC conservation program.

I have carefully considered these developments and concluded that we should continue to give a high priority to working with all IWC members to maintain the integrity of the IWC. I want to ensure that the IWC has the full support of the United States in carrying out its responsibility to conserve the great natural resources represented by whale stocks.

I am not at this time directing the Secretary of the Treasury to impose sanctions on Norwegian products for the whaling activities that led to certification by the Secretary of Commerce. I will ensure, however, that our concerns are communicated to the highest levels of the Norwegian Government. I am also requesting that further senior-level consultations with Norway and our other IWC partners be undertaken to ensure that the IWC's conservation program is upheld. I hope that our actions will encourage all members of the IWC to cooperate in its important mission.

Sincerely,

GEORGE BUSH

Note: Identical letters were sent to Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Dan Quayle, President of the Senate.

Recess Appointment of Brian C. Griffin as Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States

December 29, 1992

The President has recess-appointed Brian C. Griffin, of Oklahoma, to be Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States. He would succeed Marshall Jordan Breger.

Since 1989, Mr. Griffin has served as Deputy Assistant Attorney General with the

Tax Division at the Department of Justice. Prior to this, he served as a partner with the firm of Griffin & Griffin, 1979–80 and 1985–89. From 1980 to 1985, he served as executive vice president and general counsel for Petroleum Investments, Ltd.

Mr. Griffin graduated from Harvard Uni-

versity (B.A., 1974), Oxford University (M.A., 1976; B.A., 1983), University of Oklahoma (J.D., 1978), and Southern Methodist University (LL.M., 1989). He was

born January 11, 1953, in Oklahoma City, OK. Mr. Griffin is married, has two children, and resides in Bethesda, MD.

Remarks on the START II Treaty and the Situation in Somalia and an Exchange With Reporters

December 30, 1992

The President. Well, I have just spoken this morning by telephone with Russian President Boris Yeltsin, and I am very pleased to announce that we have completed agreement on the START II treaty. U.S. and Russian expert teams are remaining in Geneva now to complete the formal work on the treaty text. This historic treaty will reduce by two-thirds current nuclear arsenals and will dramatically lower the numbers of strategic nuclear arms permitted by START I. In my view, this treaty is good for all mankind.

President Yeltsin and I have agreed to meet in Sochi, Russia, on January 2d and 3d, where we will sign the treaty. And I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the team standing here with me today: Larry Eagleburger, Secretary Cheney, Chairman Powell, and others who have done a superb job on this treaty.

We're going to use the occasion of the meeting in Sochi to consider a number of bilateral and regional issues and then to discuss ways to fulfill the promise and the potential of the U.S.-Russia relations.

Let me just say a word about our trip to Somalia. The trip, I hope, will show the concern that all Americans feel for the people of Somalia and for the condition. These are humanitarian concerns, and in my view it is proper that the President show this concern to the people over there.

I also want to make very clear how strongly we support our troops that are over there. They're doing a first-class job. I've had a good briefing from General Powell and Secretary Cheney, and I just can't tell you how proud I am of the young men and women that are serving halfway around the world in this great humanitarian cause.

We've tried to keep Governor Clinton closely advised, informed on the Somalia trip and obviously on the arms control agreement. So I think these are both important events, the trip to Sochi and the trip to Somalia. And I would like to take this occasion, because it'll be the last I see some of you this year, to wish you all a very happy new year.

Serbia

Q. Mr. President, have you warned the Serbs not to widen the war?

The President. Well, I don't want to get into what we're doing in terms of detail there, but we've expressed our concern in a lot of different ways, Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International]. And I don't want to go into more detail on that one.

Somalia

Q. Sir, is it safe for you to go to Somalia?

The President. Yes, it's perfectly safe. I'm not in the least bit concerned of the security. I have great confidence in our military and in, certainly, as always, in the Secret Service. So no, there's not a worry in the world on that.

START II

Q. Do you worry about whether START II could actually be approved, both in the U.S. Congress and can President Yeltsin get START II approval?

The President. No, I feel confident after talking to Larry Eagleburger, representations having been made by his interlocutors there, both their Defense Secretary and their Foreign Minister, that that will be approved. Boris Yeltsin is quite confident of

that. He feels that it is a historic agreement and good for the whole world, as do I. I believe that our Congress will approve it. And of course, I've been appreciative of the words of—without committing him on any way to any details—the general words from Governor Clinton, President-elect Clinton, on this subject.

Q. Mr. President, do you view START II as a vindication of your attention to the foreign account?

The President. No, I view it as a great step for mankind. And it's not—certainly it's not a personal achievement. The people standing here with me have worked hours, endless hours, to bring this about. So it's not personal. But I take great pride in this accomplishment because I think it's a very good treaty, and I'm proud that this team was able to work it out.

POW–MIA's

Q. Are you going to ask Yeltsin to unleash more information about the American POW's situation?

The President. Well, I am confident that Boris Yeltsin will go the extra mile on that. I think he has. But we just have to wait and see on that subject because all of us remain concerned about it. But I should express my confidence in his willingness to cooperate. I don't think anyone would disagree with that at all.

I think I've got to get ready to go to Somalia. Last one.

Executive Clemency

Q. Mr. President, on the Christmas Eve pardons, does it give the appearance that Government officials are above the law?

The President. No, it should not give any such appearance. Nobody is above the law. I believe when people break the law, that's a bad thing. I've read some stupid comment to the contrary. And of course, I feel that way. But the Constitution is quite clear on the powers of the President. And sometimes a President has to make a very difficult call, and that's what I've done.

But I'm glad you asked it, because I've read some rather frivolous reporting that I don't care about the law. I pride myself on 25 or more years of public service, of serving honorably, decently, and with my integrity intact. And certainly I wouldn't feel that way if I had a lack of respect for the law. And I don't think there is one single thing in my career that could lead anybody to look at my record and make a statement of that nature. So thank you for giving me the opportunity to clear it up.

Thank you all.

Note: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. The proclamation of December 24 which granted Executive clemency to six former Government officials for their conduct related to the Iran-contra affair is listed in Appendix E at the end of this volume.

Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on the Iran-Contra Investigation

December 30, 1992

On December 14, President Bush asked the Independent Counsel to supply him with a copy of his deposition of January 11, 1988, given in connection with the Iran-contra investigation. On December 18, the Independent Counsel wrote President Bush a letter stating that his office was considering the request. The Independent Counsel assured the President that his office would "try to comply."

Yesterday, however, the Deputy Independent Counsel informed the White House that the Independent Counsel had decided not to provide President Bush with a copy of the deposition at this time. President Bush has therefore asked former Attorney General Griffin Bell to assist him in seeking to obtain for public release a copy of this document. Judge Bell will also assume full responsibility for advising the